

Abstract 648

TITLE: Politicin' With the Sisters-A Roundtable Discussion By, For and About Young Women And Those Who Serve Us

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ISSUE: Why are young women so susceptible to HIV infection? What have we as a nation done to ensure the safety, health and well being of this population? What have we as young women done to take care of us? Let's talk about IT!!!

PROJECT: The target population for this intervention is young women who are at or in high-risk social and behavioral environments. Currently the intervention is happening in an alternative High School via a class entitled "Women In Relationships." This class is for young women only!!!

RESULTS: The results of the impact that this class has made on the lives of the young women in my class may not be measurable according to the standards in which most programs/services are tracked. In saying that I believe that this workshop would not be what it should be unless some of these young women are there. We are able to look deeply at the social ills that make young women so susceptible to HIV Infection and the systems that support them.

LESSONS LEARNED: According to CDC data through 1997 African American and Latino teens accounted for 82% of the cumulative AIDS cases among young women ages 13-19 in the U.S. Among women, 15-19 year olds had the highest gonorrhea rate. Although condom use rose among sexually active students, 41.1% of African Americans; 60% of Latinos and 50.8% of white sexually active females failed to use condoms at last sexual encounter. This is alarming, yet it is the reality of the many young women I serve. There are multitudes of programs out there that serve young people and young women, but they are not meeting young women where they are. Among inner city female's studies reveal that many of them are being defined by what adults consider -the offensive hip-hop culture but this same culture seems to be giving them a certain sense of power and independence.

In closing I must say that we as young women have not come together on any social or political issue. WHY??? Do we believe that there are no injustices being done against us? Violence, Racism, Poverty, Sexism, Ageism, the '90s so-called woman, Misogyny in music, Media portrayal of this generation. The time has come for ACTION!! If we as a people, a nation, allow things to continue at the rate they have been going our Future the upcoming generation of Women will without a doubt become an Endangered Species.

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